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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
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A
HISTORICAL SUMMARY
OF
STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN
IN
NEW YORK

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FOREWORD

This publication is intended for students of public-welfare administration who wish to understand the development of State welfare programs. Several States were studied, and the report for each State is being issued separately.

Material changes have occurred during the past few years in organization and services in this State, but the present program has developed from past experience. Therefore, it seems of value to issue for students of the subject this report of the development of State services for children. The picture given is of New York in 1931 and 1933, when extended field visits were made to the State, and it should not be understood to represent the present situation. Extensive changes in the organization and services of the department of social welfare occurred during 1936 and 1937. Many of the changes made were recommended by a special commission on unemployment relief, which was appointed by the Governor in 1934 and which undertook a detailed study of State and local welfare organization.¹

¹State and Local Welfare Organization in the State of New York. Governor's Commission on Unemployment Relief. Legislative Document No. 56. Albany, N. Y., 1936.

A Historical Summary of State Services for Children in New York

THE STATE AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

New York State, with its population of 12,588,066, contains more than a tenth of the inhabitants of the whole United States. The population is very unevenly dispersed over the State, with more than half (approximately 7,000,000 persons) in New York City. Density of population to the square mile varies from 2 persons in Hamilton County to 84,878 persons in New York County; hence the average of 264 persons for the entire State is misleading.² Although the population as a whole is 84 percent urban, many counties of the State are wholly rural.³

In addition to New York City the State contains six cities of more than 100,000 population, namely, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers, Albany, and Utica.

The population of the State is heterogeneous, with New York City the greatest example of the melting pot. There the Negro population, for instance, would make the largest Negro city in the world; there are enough national groups each to constitute a fair-sized city. Because of the great contrasts between New York City and other sections of the State, organization for social welfare has been difficult and extremely complicated.

The State is both large and rich, having an area of 47,654 square miles and property assessed for State taxes at nearly 30 billion dollars in 1932.⁴

Industries and resources are varied. Clothing manufacture is by far the largest industry; the value of its products is between two and three times as much as that of the printing and publishing industry, which is next in value. Motor vehicles; foundry and machine-shop products; bakery products; electrical machinery, apparatus, and supplies; wholesale meat packing; and fur goods rank next, in the order given.⁵ New York ranks twelfth among the States in the value of the products of its mines and quarries. In 1930 there were 159,806 farms in the State, which covered 59 percent of the total land area and on which 5.7 percent of the population lived. The State ranked fifth among the States in gross income from farm products.⁶

² Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, vol. 1, Population, pp. 749-750. Washington, 1931.

³ Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1934, p. 7. U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. Washington, 1934.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁵ Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1929, vol. 3, Manufactures, pp. 358-361. Washington, 1933.

⁶ Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1934, pp. 8, 542-543, 660. U. S. Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce. Washington, 1934.

As one of the Thirteen Original States, New York has had an important position since the United States became a Nation. The first constitution for the State was adopted in 1777, and the present constitution has been in effect since January 1, 1895. The Governor serves for a 2-year term, but the legislature holds an annual session. The legislature frequently amended laws and passed special laws for cities until the adoption of a constitutional home-rule amendment in 1923,⁷ which gave cities the power to adopt and amend local laws that are not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the State and which largely checked the passage of further special city laws. Notwithstanding this effort to improve the situation there remains a difficult maze of laws, including laws on public welfare.

A reorganization of the State government in 1926 reduced the list of elected State officials to four: the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the comptroller, and the attorney general. All State services were reorganized and 18 administrative departments were created.⁸

The State is made up of 62 counties, 5 of which form Greater New York and are coterminous with the boroughs of the city. Each county outside the city of New York is subdivided into towns, which are political units, and may also include cities. The county boards of supervisors have a membership ranging from less than 20 to more than 50 supervisors elected by the various towns and cities within the county. (Five other States have similar county boards: New Jersey, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nebraska, and part of Illinois.)

Until the passage of the public-welfare law of 1929,⁹ the administration of relief was largely a town or city function carried on by the town overseers of the poor and the corresponding city officials, who were elected or appointed and who were often paid on a fee basis. The public-welfare law created county and city public-welfare districts and made it mandatory for every county public-welfare district to have a county commissioner of public welfare; and responsibility for aid to children and for certain other welfare services was transferred from the town to the county. The law made it possible also for any county to establish a county plan for administration of relief. Only a few counties have voted to centralize all relief, and the town is still largely the legal administrative unit for relief and medical care.¹⁰

⁷ Laws of 1923, p. 1165 (legislative amendment, 1924, ch. 363).

⁸ Laws of 1926, ch. 343.

⁹ Laws of 1929, ch. 565.

¹⁰ "As an emergency measure the unemployment relief act provided that town (township) welfare officers should obtain State reimbursement for relief expenditures only through the county commissioner of public welfare. * * * Thus, instead of more than 1,000 independent local relief units, 115 welfare districts were defined, comprising incorporated cities and county areas outside of these cities." Lundberg, Emma O.: Laying the Foundation for a State-wide Program of Constructive Public Relief. *Social Service Review*, vol. 7, no. 3 (September 1933), p. 463.

DEVELOPMENT OF STATE WELFARE ADMINISTRATION

If public welfare as it exists in New York State today is to be fully understood, one must recognize the historical roots, as well as the influence of economic and social conditions peculiar to the State. Certain policies and practices are so deeply rooted, having their sources in the State constitution or in early statutes, that it is difficult to bring about any rapid change, as custom and long precedent have had a definite bearing upon their development.

In New York, as in other States, the first State provision for care of the physically and mentally handicapped, the delinquent, and the criminal was the establishing of State institutions. The administration of each of the institutions except prisons was vested in a board of trustees. The constitution of 1846 provided for the election of three inspectors of State prisons to direct the prisons and to appoint all officers in them.¹¹ This provision was confirmed by statute in 1847.¹² Inspectors were to serve for terms of 3 years, one being elected each year. All final action on the administration of prisons was taken by the inspectors acting as a board, but each inspector was given specific authority to supervise and control one prison.

STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH SOCIAL WELFARE

State-wide welfare services had their beginning when a board of State commissioners of public charities was established by an act passed in 1867.¹³ This board, composed of eight unsalaried persons appointed by the Governor, one from each judicial district, was the supervisory State authority for all charitable and correctional institutions in the State receiving State aid (except prisons) and for city and county almshouses. In their second report the board classified the charitable institutions under their supervision as follows: Division 1, State charities, including institutions for the insane, blind, deaf, idiots, inebriates, and for the reformation of juvenile delinquents; division 2, local charities of counties and municipalities, including county and town poorhouses and almshouses created by special law; and division 3, "all other charities receiving State aid", which included orphan asylums and homes for friendless persons, hospital dispensaries, and charity weekday schools.¹⁴

In 1873 the name of the board was changed to the State board of charities,¹⁵ and its responsibility was extended to include other institutions not receiving State aid. By this same statute the board was given the power to appoint county boards of visitors to visit county institutions.

¹¹ Constitution, 1846, art. 5, sec. 4.

¹² Laws of 1847, ch. 480.

¹³ Laws of 1867, ch. 951.

¹⁴ Second Annual Report of the Board of [New York] State Commissioners of Public Charities, pp. 12-13. Albany, N. Y., 1869.

¹⁵ Laws of 1873, ch. 571.

In the early years of its existence the board did not have a paid staff to inspect institutions and depended upon the services of voluntary groups. Serious concern over conditions in charitable institutions, especially almshouses, led in 1872 to the formation of a private organization, the New York State Charities Aid Association, which through local visiting committees was to supplement the work of the board of State commissioners.¹⁶ The association was of such value to the State that in 1881 it was recognized as a semiofficial body, and authority was given to "visit, inspect, and examine" through its local committees any of the county poorhouses and city and town almshouses within the State when permission had been granted by a justice of the supreme court of the judicial district in which such an institution was located.¹⁷ Close cooperation in local services is still maintained between the New York State Charities Aid Association and the State board. (See p. 24.)

After more than 50 years of service, the State board of charities became the State board of social welfare in 1929.¹⁸

STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH THE MENTALLY ILL AND DEFECTIVE

During the 1870's there was a general removal of insane and mentally defective persons from almshouses and State institutions caring for other groups into additional specialized institutions that were provided. The laws of 1873 created the office of State commissioner in lunacy.¹⁹ This official, who was to be a competent physician appointed by the Governor for a term of 5 years at a salary of \$4,000, was made an ex-officio member of the State board of charities. The following year the statutes relating to the insane were revised and consolidated, and the authority to license private institutions caring for the insane that had been given to the State board of charities in 1873 was removed and placed with the State commissioner in lunacy.²⁰

In 1889 State services for the insane were transferred to a commission in lunacy consisting of three persons appointed by the Governor. One of these persons was to be a reputable physician, with at least 10 years of medical practice and with experience in the care and treatment of the insane and the management of institutions for the insane. He was to serve as chairman for a term of 6 years at a salary of \$5,000 a year. The second member was to be a reputable member of the bar of at least 10 years' standing. His term was 4 years and his salary \$3,000 a year. The third member was to be a "citizen of reputable character" who served for 2 years and received no fixed salary but was paid \$10 a day for actual services.²¹ The commission in lunacy was made a constitutional body by the State constitution of 1894,²² but in 1912²³ the name was changed to the State hospital commission. In 1926²⁴ the commission

¹⁶ Proceedings of the Conference of Charities and Corrections [now the National Conference of Social Work] for 1874-75, pp. 103, 105-107. Tolman and White, Boston, 1875.

¹⁷ Laws of 1881, ch. 323.

¹⁸ Laws of 1929, ch. 654.

¹⁹ Laws of 1873, ch. 571, sec. 9.

²⁰ Laws of 1874, ch. 446.

²¹ Laws of 1889, ch. 283.

²² Art. VIII, sec. 15.

²³ Laws of 1912, ch. 121, sec. 12.

²⁴ Laws of 1926, ch. 584, sec. 361.

was abolished and its work transferred to the newly created department of mental hygiene.

The powers and duties of the State commission in lunacy extended beyond the licensing, inspection, and supervision of institutions for the insane. The commission was also to keep a register of all insane persons in asylums, public or private, throughout the State. It was also given authority to certificate medical examiners for the insane, and within a certain time all examiners were required to be certificated.

As early as 1851 the State established the State institution for feeble-minded children at Syracuse, and subsequently four other State schools for mental defectives and an institution for epileptics were established. A special State program for the feeble-minded was instituted in 1918 when a State commission for the feeble-minded was created.²⁵ This commission consisted of three members. The chairman, appointed by the Governor for a term of 3 years, was required to be a reputable physician with at least 10 years' experience in the actual practice of his profession. He received an annual salary of \$5,000. The other members were the fiscal supervisor of State charities and the secretary of the State board of charities. Each of these members received \$15 a day, not to exceed \$1,000 a year, for attendance at meetings. Within the next 2 years the name of the commission was changed to the State commission for mental defectives.²⁶ It was the duty of the commission to administer the law relating to the custody, care, and training of the feeble-minded; to keep a record of all feeble-minded persons in the State; to establish and conduct or cooperate with other agencies in the conduct of mental clinics; to direct the transfer of feeble-minded patients from one institution to another when practicable; to recommend to the legislature the establishment of new State institutions when necessary; and to visit every State training school and private institution for the care of mentally defective persons at least once a year.

State institutions for mental defectives were administered by boards of trustees appointed by the Governor. The State board of charities had previously been given responsibility for supervision. Similar supervisory authority was given to the State commission for mental defectives, but because of the intimate relationship of these two official bodies a duplication of services did not occur during the year that this plan was in operation.

With the reorganization of the State government in 1926, the commission for mental defectives was abolished, and responsibility for its work and for administration of State institutions for mental defectives was combined with services for the insane in the department of mental hygiene.

STATE AGENCIES CONCERNED WITH PENAL AFFAIRS

Evidence of undesirable conditions in the State prisons resulted in 1876 in the creation of a special investigating committee—the New York State Prison Commission.²⁷ Under a somewhat similar

²⁵ Laws of 1918, ch. 197.

²⁶ Laws of 1919, ch. 633.

²⁷ Laws of 1876, ch. 160, secs. 1–17.

name a permanent supervisory commission was created in 1895. The Governor was authorized to appoint eight persons, one in each judicial district, who were to constitute the State commission of prisons. Members were to serve for a term of 8 years and to receive \$10 a day for actual services, not to exceed \$500 a year. The commission was authorized to elect a secretary at a salary of \$3,000 a year. It was the duty of this commission to visit and inspect all institutions for the detention of adults charged with or convicted of crime; to aid in securing adequate administration of such institutions; to approve or suggest plans for all additions to buildings; to collect statistics and to report annually on its work to the State legislature.²⁸

The laws of 1901²⁹ authorized the development of a probation system throughout the State, and in 1907³⁰ a State probation commission was created to exercise general supervision over the work of probation officers, to collect statistics on probation, and to further the effective application of the probation system and the enforcement of probation laws. This commission consisted of seven members serving without compensation but authorized to employ an executive officer at a salary of \$3,500 a year, a stenographer, and such other assistants as the appropriation allowed. Traveling expenses of the commissioners and the staff were also provided.

These two supervisory commissions were retained in the plan for State reorganization and became an integral part of the department of correction.

REORGANIZATION OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT

The multiplication of State authorities in all branches of State government as well as in welfare service resulted in several official investigations. A report made in 1919 by the New York State Reconstruction Commission on Retrenchment and Reorganization in the State government recommended the establishment of the following departments: Mental hygiene; charities; correction, with a council of correction and a board of parole and probation; and a council of public welfare composed of the chairman of the commission on mental hygiene, the commissioner of correction, the secretary of the board of charities, the commissioner of health, and the commissioner of education. Except for this last recommendation these were very largely carried out with the passage of the reorganization law in 1926.³¹

In the reorganization of the State government in 1926, 18 departments were created. Two of these were headed by elected officials; 12 were under the direction of commissioners appointed by the Governor; and in 4 departments³² a board, commission, or council served as the head.³³

The principal welfare services of the State were allocated to three departments as follows:

²⁸ Laws of 1895, ch. 1026.

²⁹ Laws of 1901, ch. 372.

³⁰ Laws of 1907, ch. 430.

³¹ Laws of 1926, chs. 584 and 606.

³² Agriculture and markets; education; civil service; and charities, later named the department of social welfare.

³³ Constitution, art. IV, sec. 1; art. V, secs. 1 and 4.

1. Department of charities (later the department of social welfare): To this department, of which the head was the State board of charities, were transferred all the powers and duties of the State board of charities, the administration of State institutions for juvenile delinquents and dependents, and the commission for the blind as a bureau of the department.

2. Department of mental hygiene: This department was placed under the direction of a commissioner of mental hygiene, who was made responsible for supervising the custody, care, and treatment of the insane, mental defectives, and epileptics. Jurisdiction and control of the State schools for epileptics and mental defectives and the State hospitals for the insane, except those housing the criminal insane, were given to this department.

3. The department of correction, headed by a commissioner, combined all functions of the superintendent of State prisons, the superintendent of prison industries, the prison industries board, the State commission of prisons, the State probation commission, and the board of parole for State prisons.³⁴ The department of correction controlled all State prisons and reformatories for adults and the two hospitals for the criminal insane.

Before the reorganization each important welfare unit of the State government had associated with it a board of managers or a commission, composed of public-spirited citizens appointed usually by the Governor, with varying powers of control. It was the aim of the State reorganization commission to create a departmental organization that would be centralized and responsible and yet to utilize the contributions of these boards in some way. Accordingly, boards of managers of institutions were generally retained as boards of visitors with only advisory powers. The commission for the blind was retained and transferred to the department of charities to assist in services for the blind. Other supervisory boards whose services were retained in the organization of the departments were the State commission of prisons, renamed the State commission of correction, and the State probation commission, both of which provided valuable supervisory and research services in the department of correction.

The department of charities (later the department of social welfare) was the only one of the three welfare departments in which a board was given responsibility for appointment of the commissioner of the department. Although such appointments are for a 2-year term, coincident with that of the Governor, the commissioner of mental hygiene has held office continuously since the creation of the department, and the department of correction had had only two commissioners in the 7 years of its existence. New York has tried out various forms of organization for its welfare services: The lay board; the board including one or more professional workers and lay representatives; and the board composed of one paid professional member and ex-officio representatives from related State agencies. The need for professional direction in welfare services has been recognized in the qualifications for personnel set in the laws and in the appointments that have been made.

³⁴ The board of parole has since been abolished and a division of parole has been established in the executive department (Laws of 1930, ch. 824).

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE

DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES

By a process of gradual expansion in supervisory and administrative responsibilities the present department of social welfare has been evolved from the first State supervisory authority in New York, the board of State commissioners of public charities. The development from a supervisory board to an administrative department of which the State board of social welfare is the head has been an unbroken sequence. Weak spots in organization and in authority have been strengthened gradually. Although certain general responsibilities, such as supervision of the care of the mentally ill and defective, have been assigned to other specialized State departments, these changes have been made without such complete change in administration as has occurred in most States. The name of the State board was changed in 1873³⁵ to the State board of charities. The department created in 1926³⁶ was designated as the department of charities, but in 1929 these names were changed to the State board of social welfare and the department of social welfare,³⁷ as indicating more clearly the services provided.

The supervisory responsibility over charitable and correctional institutions receiving State aid, which was given to the State board of charities in 1867, was extended within the next two decades to include all charitable and correctional institutions in the State except State prisons. The board was also given authority to establish regulations as to the reception and retention in private institutions of persons supported by public funds.

As reports of the State board in 1896 and 1897 brought out the abuses resulting from the careless placing of children, the board was empowered to visit any children placed out but not legally adopted and to prohibit any person or association from placing children. Thus step by step increased powers were given to the State board.

In 1900 this growth in power was checked when the State board of charities instituted a court case in an attempt to compel the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to accept its supervision. As a result the court of appeals defined a "charitable institution" within the meaning of the constitution and statutes as "one that in some form or to some extent receives public money for the support and maintenance of indigent persons, and by public money is meant money raised by taxation not only in the State at large, but in any city, county, or town."³⁸ The outcome of this decision was the sudden reduction by somewhat less than half in

³⁵ Laws of 1873, ch. 571.

³⁶ Laws of 1926, ch. 651.

³⁷ Laws of 1929, ch. 654.

³⁸ *People ex rel. State Board of Charities v. New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children*, 161 N. Y. 233; 162 N. Y. 429.

the number of institutions subject to the supervision of the board. Thus the legislature and the general public were prevented from having complete information regarding dependency in the State or the work of charitable corporations over the State, and the protection heretofore extended to many institutional inmates and trust funds was withdrawn.³⁹ Not until 1931 were these limitations removed, when a law was passed requiring the State board to establish rules and regulations governing buildings, records, equipment, and standards of care for all child-caring institutions, hospitals, infirmaries, homes for the aged, maternity homes, and agencies placing out or boarding out children.⁴⁰

The supervisory services of the State board of charities were increased in 1915⁴¹ when county boards of child welfare were created to administer aid to mothers of dependent children and responsibility for supervision was given to the State board. State responsibility for supervision of local public-welfare services was again emphasized in 1929 when the department of social welfare was given authority to supervise the work of commissioners of public welfare created by the public-welfare law.⁴²

The first administrative authority granted to the board of charities was the control of State funds for the support of poor persons who had no local settlement. Later the care of Indian poor and the removal from the State of persons belonging in other States or countries were also authorized. The authority of the board was materially increased in 1926,⁴³ when the department of charities, of which it was the head, was given administrative control instead of supervisory authority over a group of State institutions. The boards of managers of these institutions were abolished and a board of visitors for each institution was created in their place. Services for the blind under the direction of the commission for the blind were added to the department at this time. The old-age-security act enacted in 1930 also added to the administrative duties of the department.⁴⁴ In addition to providing for supervision of the work of certain local public agencies, the act authorized the department to administer State funds used to reimburse these agencies for part of their expenditures.

The following additional powers and duties have been conferred upon the department of social welfare from time to time:⁴⁵ The licensing, visitation, and inspection of all dispensaries and the establishment of rules for their operation;⁴⁶ the approval of sites and plans for buildings for county and city public "homes" and of plans for public general hospitals;⁴⁷ the administration of Indian affairs in general;⁴⁸ the approval or disapproval of applications for in-

³⁹ Brackett, Jeffrey R.: *Supervision and Education in Charity*, pp. 27-36. Macmillan Co., New York, 1903.

⁴⁰ Laws of 1931, ch. 454.

⁴¹ Laws of 1915, ch. 228.

⁴² Laws of 1929, ch. 565, sec. 138.

⁴³ Laws of 1926, ch. 651, sec. 384.

⁴⁴ Laws of 1930, ch. 387.

⁴⁵ Chs. 873 and 874, Laws of 1936, charged the State department of social welfare with additional powers and duties relating to the administration of relief and the supervision of public-welfare work in the local units.

⁴⁶ *Cahill's Consolidated Laws*, 1930, State charities law, art. 15, secs. 290-296.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, public-welfare law, art. 11, secs. 90-99; art. 10, secs. 83-86.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, State department law, art. 14, sec. 389.

corporation of institutions for charitable purposes and the approval of corporations from outside the State which seek to maintain charitable institutions in the State of New York; ⁴⁹ the approval or disapproval of applications for the incorporation of nonprofit hospital-service plans.⁵⁰

ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

BOARD OF SOCIAL WELFARE

In 1934 the board was composed of 12 unsalaried members,⁵¹ appointed for 8-year terms by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the senate. One member was appointed from each of the nine judicial districts in the State and three additional members from New York City. Each board member received actual expenses and \$15 a day for each day spent in meetings of the board or the committees, the total amount not to exceed \$500 in any year.⁵² In this board were vested certain administrative powers, including the appointment of the commissioner of social welfare, who was the chief administrative officer, and the assistant commissioners, who served as heads of the various divisions, and the secretary of the board.⁵³ These officers as well as all other employees of the department of social welfare were responsible to the board for their official acts. It was also the duty of the board to plan the organization of the department and to prescribe the duties and functions of divisions, officers, and employees.

The board held regular meetings once a month, except during August and September, in order to carry on its work. In addition, special meetings were called when necessary. At its annual meeting the board elected a president and a vice president to hold office for a year. The secretary was a salaried member of the State department appointed by the board.

Much of the detailed work of the board was carried on in the four general committees appointed by the president of the board. The executive committee was responsible for matters affecting the work of the department, including the departmental budget, when questions arose that had to be settled before the next board meeting. The committee on publication supervised the preparation and publication of the annual report. Proposed or pending legislation affecting the department was referred to the committee on legislation. The committee on legal questions considered all matters referred to it by the board or the commissioner for legal interpretation. Special committees were also appointed by the president of the board to serve as advisory committees to the administrative divisions of the department, the divisions of State aid, State institutions, child welfare, medical care, old-age security, and research. Each advisory committee met with the division head to hear reports of divisional activi-

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, membership corporations law, art. 2, sec. 11, as amended by Laws of 1935, ch. 320.

⁵⁰ Laws of 1934, ch. 595, adding art. 14 to the insurance law providing for approval or disapproval of the incorporation of nonprofit hospital-service plans.

⁵¹ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, secs. 10 and 13.

⁵² Sec. 3a, ch. 873, Laws of 1936, made certain changes in the membership of the board, compensation of members, and term of office. More significant was the change in the powers and duties of the board, which were described as regulatory and advisory and not administrative or executive.

⁵³ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, State charities law, sec. 12.

ties, so that it might submit reports with appropriate recommendations to the board.⁵⁴

Almost without exception the board members have served for long periods of time. The membership of the board on January 1, 1934, included one person who had served for nearly 20 years and five others who had served from 12 to 20 years. Reappointment was the rule rather than the exception. In addition to representing the whole State geographically, the board represented various professions and included doctors, lawyers, and social workers. Such a board has both an accumulation of information from long contact with the work and a professional point of view with regard to it.

COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The chief executive officer of the department since 1929 has been known as the commissioner of social welfare. He is appointed by the board to hold office during its pleasure at a salary of \$12,000 a year.⁵⁵ The commissioner has general supervision of all branches of the work of the department and of all its employees, being in turn responsible to the board for the administration of the department. At the time of this study, the board prescribed duties for the commissioner in addition to those listed in the statutes.

The commissioner was appointed by the board of social welfare in 1932. Prior to his appointment he had served as a member of the board for about 2 years. He has had long experience in social and civic work, having spent $7\frac{1}{2}$ years as secretary of the Buffalo Charity Organization Society and about 4 years as secretary of the Council of Social Agencies of Buffalo immediately preceding his appointment as commissioner of social welfare. His predecessor had been in office for about 16 years at the time of his resignation in 1932.

DIVISIONS

Although the law provided that the department should have certain divisions, it also gave the board power to establish additional divisions or bureaus and to abolish any division, including those listed in the original law.⁵⁶ Two divisions named in the law, the division of visitation and inspection and the division of special welfare interests, were abolished and their activities transferred to other divisions by action of the board on June 30, 1928. New divisions and bureaus within the divisions have been created as the activities of the department have expanded.

In December 1933 the department had seven major divisions, each under the direction of an assistant commissioner. These divisions were: Medical care, child welfare, State aid, administration of State institutions, old-age security, research, and the division for the blind. In addition there was a division of general administration, which was under the direct charge of the commissioner. In this division was the bureau of office administration, which handled the fiscal affairs and transactions of the department of social welfare.

⁵⁴ Bylaws of the [New York] State Board of Social Welfare, pp. 4-6. State Department of Social Welfare. Albany, N. Y., 1931.

⁵⁵ This is the salary allowed most commissioners of other departments in the State government.

⁵⁶ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, sec. 11.

The department had two branch offices, one in New York city and the other in Buffalo. A large part of the work of some of the divisions was done in the New York office.

ACTIVITIES OF THE DIVISIONS

DIVISION OF MEDICAL CARE

The division of medical care has supervision over all matters relating to medical institutions. The division of dependent adults was established as a separate division in 1928 but was subsequently reduced to the status of a bureau and made a part of the division of medical care. At the time of this study, the staff of this latter division, in addition to the assistant commissioner, consisted of the director of the bureau of dependent adults, six inspectors, and several clerical assistants.

Supervision of hospitals and dispensaries.

The division of medical care supervised all private hospitals and all public hospitals except those for mental diseases and the feeble-minded. In 1931 the board of social welfare was given authority to make rules and regulations concerning records, buildings and equipment, and standards of care in the operation of any hospital; infirmary; dispensary; home for invalid, aged, or indigent persons; or lying-in asylum where women are received for treatment during pregnancy or after delivery. At this same time the department of social welfare was given authority to inspect such of these institutions as were unincorporated, even though they did not receive public funds. Under these provisions there were added to the institutions already under supervision some 300 hospitals, mostly small institutions under private ownership. As no additional staff was provided for these added duties, it was not possible for the division of medical care to accept fully the responsibility given to it. On July 1, 1933, the division had under active inspection 77 public hospitals and 271 private hospitals classified according to function into five groups, as follows: General, tuberculous, contagious, orthopedic, and other special institutions.

This division is also responsible for licensing and supervising dispensaries. On July 1, 1933, 319 dispensaries were under supervision, 109 of them public and 210 under private control. Of the total number, slightly more than half were not connected with hospitals but were for the most part small dental and public-health clinics. For a number of years the board has made it a principle not to license new agencies for general dispensary work unless they were connected with hospitals.

Supervision of hospitals and dispensaries involves inspection, investigation of complaints, and approval of plans for new buildings. Through reports sent to the division of medical care from these institutions it is possible to keep closely in touch with hospital and medical matters in the State. For instance, the figures compiled from the reports showed plainly in 1932 that the burden that fell on the hospitals because of the depression had largely been assumed by the public, either directly by public hospitals or indirectly through payment to private hospitals of public funds. Information was ob-

tained pertaining to the number of days' care given, the extent to which the hospitals of the State were utilized, the average number of days spent by each patient in the hospital, and the per-capita cost of hospital care.

The division of medical care was also interested in a study made for the purpose of obtaining legislation that would enable hospitals to enter claims for the care of persons receiving compensation as a result of highway accidents.

Reports from dispensaries in 1933 showed a notable increase in dispensary work. It was explained that this was doubtless due to the prevailing unemployment, which forced many persons who in other years had been treated by physicians in private practice to apply for care at dispensaries.

Bureau of dependent adults.

This bureau supervised public homes, private institutions for the aged, and also temporary and special institutions for adults. Prior to 1931 the supervision of the last-named group was limited to institutions receiving public funds, but when the State charities law was amended institutions not receiving public funds were also brought under supervision, which added about 200 homes for the aged and 50 other institutions for temporary and special care of adults.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 1933, at least two visits of inspection were made to each of the 62 public homes by inspectors from the bureau of dependent adults. Improvements in housing facilities, physical equipment, and in record keeping in many institutions were a direct result of suggestions made either by the inspectors or by cooperating agencies. A summary of these accomplishments has been included in the annual reports of the bureau.

Detailed statistics of movement of population were kept by means of the monthly reports sent to the bureau of dependent adults by each institution under supervision.

DIVISION OF CHILD WELFARE

This division was responsible for the department's activities in relation to child welfare, including the supervision of child-caring institutions and agencies. At the time of this study it included two bureaus—the bureau of boards of child welfare and the bureau of foster-home care—each of which was in charge of a supervisor. A bureau of home relief was set up in the division of child welfare in 1930 after the passage of the public-welfare law in 1929. This bureau was organized to give advisory service to local public-welfare officials on problems of outdoor relief. It was discontinued in 1933, after the organization of the State temporary emergency relief administration, which duplicated the services of the bureau.⁵⁷

The work of this division is discussed in the section "State services for children" (p. 23). In addition to the assistant commissioner, the staff in 1934 consisted of the 2 supervisors in charge of bureaus, 11 senior social workers, and several clerical assistants.

⁵⁷ Sec. 31 of ch. 873, Laws of 1936, provided that between July 1, 1936, and July 1, 1937, all the functions, powers, and duties exercised by the temporary emergency relief administration in the administration of home relief should be transferred to the department of social welfare.

DIVISION OF STATE AID

In this division were centralized all activities relating to poor persons who are State charges, the removal of nonresident and alien dependents to other States and countries, and the administration of Indian affairs. The creation of a bureau of removals and a bureau of Indian affairs, each in charge of a supervisor, was suggested as desirable, but a bill providing for such a reorganization and an accompanying appropriation was vetoed by the Governor in 1931. In addition to the assistant commissioner, the staff in 1934 consisted of a supervisor of social work (Indian welfare), three social workers, and several clerical assistants.

State and nonresident poor.

The division had administrative responsibility to investigate and dispose of cases of State, nonresident, and alien poor persons referred by public-welfare officials. "State poor" are persons in need of public relief who have no legal settlement in any town or city of the State and who have not resided in any public-welfare district for 60 days within the year preceding application for aid. When such a person applied for aid or medical care, he was referred to the division of State aid and after investigation the division might remove him to his place of legal settlement or, if he had none, might make provision for his care and maintenance at State expense.

"Nonresident poor" are persons who have no legal settlement in any town or city of the State but who have resided in a public-welfare district for at least 60 days prior to application for relief. Such persons were cared for at the expense of the public-welfare district but were referred to the division of State aid for removal to their place of legal settlement when it was practicable.

"Alien poor" are persons of foreign birth who have not yet acquired American citizenship and who are dependent upon public relief. Alien poor acquire a settlement in the State in the same way that citizens do (that is, by residing in a town or city for a period of 1 year without being recipients of public relief) and are therefore the financial responsibility of the district in which settlement has been established.

Nonresident or State poor persons are not removed from the State unless their settlement in another State has been definitely established or responsible relatives agree to make provision for their care. Alien poor who have lived less than 5 years in the United States are referred to the United States Immigration Service for deportation. If the social investigation indicates the desirability of return to the native country after a 5-year residence in the United States an effort is made to effect voluntary repatriation.

During the fiscal year ended June 30, 1933, 3,501 persons were removed from New York State, of whom 511 were State poor, 2,557 were nonresident poor, and 433 were alien poor. It cost the State \$60,000 to effect these removals, but it was estimated that the expense of caring for the poor persons removed would have amounted to \$1,820,620 for 1 year. Maintenance of State poor during this same period of time amounted to \$67,782.

Assistance to Indians. ss

The division of State aid also had administrative responsibility for the welfare of the 5,000 Indians living on the reservations in the

State and for the care and support of Indian poor. All applications for admissions to and discharges from the Thomas Indian School were carefully considered by the division in order that the best interests of each child might be served.

The division of State aid has made a real effort to improve health and social conditions among the Indian population of the State. With the assistance of the department of health, better medical care has been obtained. Clinics have been held on the various reservations. Persons in need of mental care in institutions have been committed whenever possible. An attempt has been made also to assist Indian boys and girls to make satisfactory vocational adjustments. The division has endeavored to find employment for the young people in localities where supervision could be provided by responsible social agencies. The division is carrying out the provisions of the public-welfare and Indian laws in relation to the care and protection of the Indians living on the reservations in the State. The material interests of the Indians have also been protected by agents or attorneys appointed by the division. The division has directed the distribution of annuities and has guarded the rights of the Indians under all circumstances.

Owing to the economic depression, it was necessary to aid increasing numbers of Indians. During the year ended June 30, 1933, 817 families, including 1,764 individuals, or over 35 percent of the total Indian population living on the reservations, were given relief in their homes, and 443 individuals were cared for in hospitals and institutions. The cost of maintenance for these Indian poor persons amounted to \$112,218.

DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION OF STATE INSTITUTIONS

This division was created in 1926. At the time of this study it was responsible for the supervision of the work of five State institutions:

(1) New York State Training School for Girls, Hudson, which receives girls not over the age of 16 years committed by children's courts as delinquent.

(2) New York State Agricultural and Industrial School, Industry, which receives from the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth judicial districts boys 12 to 16 years of age committed by children's courts as delinquent.

(3) New York State Training School for Boys, Warwick, which receives from the first, second, third, and ninth judicial districts boys 12 to 16 years of age committed by children's courts as delinquent.

(4) Thomas Indian School, Iroquois, which receives orphan, destitute, or neglected Indian children from any of the several reservations located in the State.

(5) New York State Woman's Relief Corps Home, Oxford, which receives needy veterans and their wives, widows, daughters, and mothers, and Army nurses. This was the only institution for the care of adults that the department administered.

The New York State Hospital for the Treatment of Incipient Pulmonary Tuberculosis and the New York State Reconstruction Home previously under the control of the department of social welfare were transferred to the department of health in 1931.⁵³

The department of social welfare has been given complete fiscal control of the State training school for boys, which was established by the legislature in 1929, but for the other four institutions fiscal control is vested in the division of standards and purchase in the

⁵³ Laws of 1931, ch. 481.

executive department.⁵⁹ As all institutional policies were determined by the department of social welfare, this divided control not only complicated matters for the institution superintendents but also duplicated much work.

It was the general policy of the department that the population of each institution should not exceed 500. The new school for delinquent boys at Warwick was being developed in accordance with this policy.

Administration.

The assistant commissioner in charge of the division of administration of State institutions and her assistants visited the institutions frequently. The division supervised the social and administrative policies of the institutions; selection and supervision of personnel; relationship of the institutions to local, State, and national agencies; equipment and maintenance of the plant.

Board of visitors.—Each of the five institutions had a board of seven unsalaried visitors⁶⁰ appointed by the Governor, with the advice and consent of the senate, for overlapping terms of 7 years. The boards were required by law to hold monthly meetings and also to make monthly visits to the institutions, either as a board or through a majority of the members. Monthly reports of meetings had to be sent to the department of social welfare and to the Governor and an annual report made to the department giving a detailed account of visits and suggestions for needed changes. The responsibility of the boards is advisory, though the law provides that the department may require additional duties of them.⁶¹

Institution personnel.—The superintendents of the institutions are selected and appointed by the State board of social welfare under civil-service regulations.⁶² The positions of superintendent are in the competitive class of the civil service and qualifications for all of them have been kept relatively high. At the time of this study, in addition to graduation from an institution of recognized standing, specialization in social service was required for superintendents of the schools for delinquents, specialization in education for the superintendent of the Thomas Indian School, and specialization in business administration or social service for the superintendent of the New York State Woman's Relief Corps Home. However, an equivalent might be substituted for the educational requirements. For each institution at least 5 years' experience was required, of which 2 years must have been in an administrative capacity.⁶³

All the other key positions in the institutions were also in the competitive class of civil service, and requirements were prescribed by the department of social welfare, but teachers, nurses, and some of the skilled workmen were in the noncompetitive civil service, although qualifications were set by the department.

Parole.—Each of the three training schools had its own staff to supervise parole, although the division of administration of State

⁵⁹ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State finance law, sec. 150, as amended by laws of 1931, ch. 453.

⁶⁰ The board of visitors for the State agricultural and industrial school was composed of 15 members.

⁶¹ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, secs. 51–52.

⁶² *Ibid.*, secs. 54–55.

⁶³ Classification of Positions in the Civil Service, pp. 686, 690, 691, 695. Legis. Doc. No. 55. Joint Committee on Classification in Civil Service. Albany, N. Y., 1932.

institutions was responsible for the formulation of general policies and had final authority as to methods and procedures used. Parole work for boys and girls began as soon as they were received in the institutions. A social investigation of each child was made as soon as possible after his commitment and subsequent visits were made to the home and to the child in the institution. Insofar as they were able the parole officers undertook to prepare the home for the child's return, making use of local agencies in every way possible. Eligibility for parole has not been based on any specified merit or credit system but has depended upon the progress of the boy or girl in conduct, work, and training, and on the home to which he will be returned.

Special services to the institutions.

The assistant commissioner in charge of the division of administration of State institutions has made extensive use of the State departments and of the State colleges and universities to obtain special services for the institutions. A medical-service program was inaugurated in 1931 at the Thomas Indian School in conjunction with the medical and dental school of the University of Buffalo and the Buffalo City Hospital. Through the cooperation of the University of Rochester Medical School and the Strong Memorial Hospital, a permanent psychiatric unit was established at the State agricultural and industrial school.⁶⁴ An arrangement was also made for the Medical Center of Columbia University to give medical care and attention to the boys in the training school at Warwick. The services of the department of education were enlisted for surveys of educational needs at the State agricultural and industrial school and the Thomas Indian School. As a result a junior-high-school unit was established at the Indian school, and greater emphasis was placed on "vocational training and preparation for life after leaving the school."⁶⁵ A similar coordination of educational and vocational training was made in 1932 in the industrial school at Industry.⁶⁶ The teaching of trades under the supervision of a vocational director was given a more important place at all the institutions.

The New York State Library cooperated in a study of the libraries in these institutions, with the result that the position of librarian was established within each institution. As no suitable list of the best books for use in welfare institutions was available, the committee on institutional libraries of the American Library Association prepared a list of books for boys and one for girls, which were edited by the New York State Library and published and distributed by the department of social welfare to welfare institutions in the State.

The department has encouraged institutional staff members to obtain additional training in their respective fields, and in some instances scholarships have been provided.

DIVISION OF OLD-AGE SECURITY

This division was established to supervise the work of public-welfare officials responsible for administration of article XIV-A

⁶⁴ Sixty-fifth Annual Report of the New York State Board of Social Welfare for the Year Ending June 30, 1931, pp. 194-195. Albany, N. Y., 1932.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 195.

⁶⁶ Sixty-sixth Annual Report of the New York State Board of Social Welfare for the Year Ending June 30, 1932, p. 187. Albany, N. Y., 1933.

of the public-welfare law, entitled "Security Against Old-Age Want."⁶⁷ The division administered the State appropriation that was used to reimburse the public-welfare districts for one-half of the old-age relief they had furnished. The law provided for relief in their own homes to needy persons 70 years of age and over who were citizens and who met certain residence and other requirements.

The staff of the division in 1934 consisted of the assistant commissioner, 3 district supervisors, 14 senior social workers (5 of whom were in the central office, 6 in the New York office, and 3 in the Buffalo office), and a staff of auditors and clerical assistants.

Applications for old-age relief were made to the commissioner of public welfare of the county or city public-welfare districts. After investigation, the commissioner decided whether or not to grant relief. Copies of the applications and reports of investigations were filed with the State division of old-age security and approved before the division authorized the State to make partial reimbursement. Monthly reports of payments were also received and reviewed. The division had set up regulations for the administration of such relief, including policies for granting relief to persons owning property or having certain kinds of insurance, and had prepared forms and blanks on which applications were made and records kept, thus obtaining uniformity in the records kept in the local offices and reports filed with the State division.

The field staff advised and assisted local officials concerning the principles of case investigations and reports and visited applicants in special cases. Careful consideration was given to all complaints and appeals received, and special inquiries were made when necessary.

The total expenditures of the public-welfare districts during the fiscal year ended June 30, 1933, were \$14,683,738.60. Refunds from recipients or their relatives or from their estates amounted to \$227,151.33, making the net disbursement for old-age relief during the year \$14,456,587.31. For one-half of this amount the State made reimbursement.

The State also reimbursed the public-welfare districts in part for the cost of administering the law, including salaries paid to persons employed in the work, their traveling expenses, and certain necessary office expenses. A small portion of the local cost of administration consisted of items not reimbursable in part by the State, but for a total of \$799,119.82 expended in administering the law the State made reimbursement to the extent of one-half. This amount represents an overhead of approximately 5.5 percent of the total amount of relief furnished to the beneficiaries under the law.

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

This division was created by action of the board of social welfare in November 1933. It began in the fall of 1930 as a bureau of research attached to the division of general administration, but the rapid expansion of the work of the bureau made the status of a division desirable. This division was responsible for special studies and

⁶⁷ Laws of 1930, chs. 337 and 338.

research relating to social-welfare problems, compilation of welfare statistics, interpretation of statistical data, preparation of reports and other publications. In addition to the assistant commissioner the regular staff for 1934-35 included two senior statisticians, a principal clerk, a principal editorial clerk, and clerical assistants.

The division has undertaken to establish a uniform reporting system on a State-wide basis for all agencies reporting to the department. Monthly reports from agencies in the following fields were received: Child-caring institutions and agencies, boards of child welfare, public homes for dependents, private homes for aged persons, public home and work relief (jointly with the temporary emergency relief administration), and public relief to aged and blind persons. In order to promote uniform methods of reporting, standard units of measurements, and common terminology, statistical handbooks for the different types of services were being prepared. Although the division fully recognized the value of field service in the development of a uniform statistical reporting system, lack of funds had prohibited the establishment of regular field services. Occasional field trips had been made by the director and his assistants, and field service was available in or near New York City from the New York office.

In developing the plan for complete social statistics throughout the State, the division has had active cooperation and assistance from the Spelman Fund and the Social Science Research Council. The division has also cooperated with the United Hospital Fund of New York City in the preparation of forms for reports from hospitals.

DIVISION FOR THE BLIND

This division developed from the bureau for the blind created in 1926, when the State commission for the blind became part of the department of social welfare (department of charities). The bureau for the blind, previously in the division of general administration, was changed to a division of the department of social welfare by action of the board of social welfare in November 1933. The division was under the direction of an assistant commissioner and a board of commissioners for the blind, which consisted of five members. The staff of the division consisted of 5 supervisors, 3 assistants, 10 home teachers, and 2 nurses.

A complete register of the blind in the State was maintained, and an active program for the prevention of blindness was carried on under the direction of a registered nurse. The division has conducted a limited placement service for blind workers and has supplied industrial training in homes and private workshops as well as home teaching in special type for the blind, and in simple occupations of the home. Although there was in 1934 no specific State relief program for the blind, provision was made for county relief in the 57 counties exclusive of Greater New York.⁶⁸ The commission for the blind was responsible for the investigation of applications for relief allowances and for recommendations to county boards of supervisors. From the time the relief law began to function in 1923 until the end

⁶⁸ Laws of 1922, ch. 185.

of the fiscal year, June 30, 1932, a total of 1,381 applications were filed. Of these, 844 persons were found to be eligible for relief, and allowances totaling \$161,974 were recommended to the county board of supervisors for the fiscal year.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS

The department of social welfare has made considerable use of the radio for educational and publicity purposes. Assistant commissioners and other members of the staff have explained the work of the department over the radio. Their speeches have frequently been printed in the newspapers and sometimes mimeographed for general distribution. Special articles have also been prepared for various magazines. A monthly publication, the *Social Welfare Bulletin*, has been issued since January 1930. This bulletin includes much valuable information on welfare work throughout the State, with special emphasis on the activities of the State department of social welfare.

The department has cooperated closely with all groups interested in the development of social welfare. The office of the State conference of social work was located in the department, and members of the staff assisted in the regional conferences held throughout the State. Active interest was also maintained in the State association of public-welfare officials and in the State conference of mayors.

For the benefit of social agencies, several directories have been published by the department from time to time: The *Directory of Hospitals and Dispensaries*; the *Directory of Welfare Officials and Agencies in New York State (exclusive of New York City)*; the *Directory of Child Welfare Agencies and of Homes and Other Institutions for Children*; and the *Directory of Homes for the Aged and Other Institutions for Dependent Adults in New York State*. The public-welfare law and State charities law have been published, each in a pamphlet for distribution.

The annual reports of the department have included information about the work of the department and statistical summaries of the services and equipment of agencies under its supervision. More detailed studies of special problems were issued as separate publications. One of these, published in 1933, is *Volume and Cost of Child Dependency in New York State for the Year Ending December 31, 1931*, prepared by the division of child welfare with the cooperation of the division of research.⁶⁹ Several short bulletins on the history of public welfare in New York State have also been prepared.

PERSONNEL OF THE DEPARTMENT

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS

Except the commissioner, the entire staff of the department of social welfare was under civil service at the time of this study. With the reorganization of the State government, civil service was established in a department of civil service headed by the civil-service commission.⁷⁰ Through the establishment of lists of eligibles all positions except those in the unclassified service were controlled by

⁶⁹ A second publication in 1934 gave similar information for the year ending Dec. 31, 1932.

⁷⁰ Laws of 1926, ch. 354, as amended by Laws of 1927, ch. 440.

the department of civil service. All but a few positions were in the competitive class. In the department of social welfare the exemptions included one blind stenographer for the assistant commissioner for the division of the blind and a number of minor positions in the State institutions.⁷¹ Vacancies in the department of social welfare were filled insofar as practicable by promotion from positions in lower grades after promotional examinations were given. Dismissal could be only for stated causes.

The heads of divisions did not help to plan examinations, but they were consulted by the department of civil service as to the qualifications for and duties of each position. The commission was aided by experts in the field of social welfare in planning examinations and grading papers. The three persons making the highest rating in the examination were certified to the department for choice of appointment.

Efforts have been made to raise standards as rapidly as possible. In 1930 the State legislature authorized an investigation of positions in the State civil service, including those in the department of social welfare.⁷² This investigation resulted in recommendations for higher standards and for salaries commensurate with the responsibilities and duties of the staff members.

The effect of these recommendations was seen in the examination held in March 1931 for field agents for the newly created division of old-age security. Not only was the salary scale raised, but the educational requirements were also increased so as to include: "(a) Completion of not less than 2 years of a college or university course leading to a degree and * * * not less than 3 years of experience (paid full time) as a case worker with an accredited family relief or similar agency; or (b) not less than 1 year of instruction in a recognized school of social work and * * * not less than 2 years of experience (paid full time) as a case worker with an accredited family relief or similar agency." Provision was also made for substitution of additional college work for part of the required case-work experience. The written examination had a relative weight of 4, and training, experience, and general qualifications were weighted as 6.⁷³

Differentiation in the classification of workers in the different divisions of the department was also evident, so that some specialization was possible. For instance, requirements for inspectors of welfare institutions included graduation from an institution of recognized standing with specialization in the social sciences and 2 years of institutional experience in nursing or dispensary work; and requirements for senior social workers included graduation from an institution of recognized standing with specialization in the social sciences, preferably graduation from a recognized school of social work, and 3 years of experience in full-time paid social work in a recognized social agency.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Civil Service Law; rules and regulations as amended to Feb. 15, 1931, pp. 78, 82, 83. State Civil Service Commission, Albany, N. Y.

⁷² Report of the [New York State] Joint Legislative Committee on Classification of Positions in the Civil Service, p. 9. Albany, N. Y., 1932.

⁷³ Examination notice of Mar. 28, 1931, item 23, field agent. New York Department of Civil Service, Albany, N. Y., 1931.

⁷⁴ Report of the [New York State] Joint Legislative Committee on Classification of Positions in the Civil Service, pp. 447, 659-660. Albany, N. Y., 1932.

Many of the staff members had served for long periods of time, and there was wide variation in their qualifications both as to general and special training and in the extent and character of their previous professional experience. At the time of the visit to the department in 1931 few of the field workers were college graduates with additional training in social work. Many of them had had little or no previous experience in social work. This condition, however, was expected to show gradual improvement as soon as the new requirements could be put into effect.

SALARY SCALE

Salaries are fixed in the annual appropriation act.⁷⁵ Although the commissioner of social welfare received a salary of \$12,000 a year at the time of this study, the same amount that most of the other heads of departments received, the salary of the assistant commissioners, except the assistant commissioner of old-age security, was considerably lower than salaries of similar officials in other State departments and of comparable executives in private organizations. Assistant commissioners in the department of education received \$8,000 a year; those in the department of agriculture and markets received \$7,000 and \$6,000; and the assistant commissioner in the department of mental hygiene received \$9,000.⁷⁶ Yet three of the assistant commissioners in the department of social welfare received only \$4,750; one received \$4,800; and the assistant commissioners directing the division of administration of State institutions and the division for the blind received only \$4,000. The responsibility, extent, and importance of the duties assigned to these assistant commissioners make the differences seem most unfortunate. The salary of the assistant commissioner of old-age security, who had been recently appointed, was \$6,500.

Salaries for bureau directors were for the most part rather low. In the division of child welfare the two bureau directors received \$2,700. The director of Indian welfare received \$2,500, and the director of the bureau of dependent adults in the division of medical care received \$4,750. It is difficult to understand this wide variation in salaries for positions demanding like qualifications and of comparable responsibility.

Field agents or inspectors classified as social workers in the division of State aid, senior social workers in the division of child welfare, inspectors of welfare institutions in the division of medical care, and a social-welfare investigator in the division of administration of State institutions received salaries varying from \$2,000 to \$3,000. The 1933 appropriations show seven workers at \$2,000, three at \$2,100, three at \$2,200, one at \$2,400, two at \$2,500, two at \$2,550, and one at \$3,000. In the division of old-age security six senior social workers received \$2,250, four \$2,500, one \$2,750, and two \$3,000.

⁷⁵ Laws of New York, 1933, ch. 120, pp. 396-402.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 227, 280-282, 357.

STATE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Several departments in the New York State government were concerned with the social welfare of children to some degree when this study was made: The departments of social welfare, correction, mental hygiene, education, health, and labor. No attempt is made to give a complete analysis of the work of these departments, but such activities as may be included in the welfare divisions of other States are described.

Although informal interdepartmental relationships have been built up by staff members in the various State departments, there was need for clearing interdepartmental information and for arriving at a better understanding of the policies and practices of coordinate departments.

In February 1933 Governor Lehman appointed an interdepartmental State children's council to correlate the work of the departments of correction, education, health, labor, mental hygiene, and social welfare insofar as it related to the interests of children. The council has undertaken to study the child-welfare functions and activities of the several State departments in relation to each other and also in relation to local child-welfare work, both public and private, with the purpose of formulating a plan for needed legislative and administrative changes. No funds were appropriated for the work of the council and as a result its work did not progress rapidly.

It is interesting to note that in the reorganization of the State government in 1926⁷⁷ a division of interdepartmental relations was set up in the executive department, but the provision authorizing it was repealed the next year before the division had an opportunity to function. This division of interdepartmental relations was to be composed of the following standing members: The assistant to the Governor, the commissioners of education, health, mental hygiene, and correction, and a representative of the department of charities designated by the State board of charities. The Governor was to serve *ex officio* as chairman of the division and was authorized to invite to meetings the representatives of any other department whose interests were involved.

A State commission to examine laws relating to child welfare was created in 1920.⁷⁸ This commission consisted of 16 persons—3 from the senate, 3 from the assembly, 5 to represent the State departments of education, labor, and health, the board of charities, and the State probation commission, and 5 additional members appointed by the Governor. The members of the commission served without compensation, but until 1926 annual appropriations were made for the expenses of the commission and the employment of a director and assistants. The work of the commission was divided among the following

⁷⁷ Laws of 1926, ch. 546, sec. 56; Laws of 1927, ch. 21.

⁷⁸ Laws of 1920, ch. 699.

subcommittees: Education; health; labor; institutional care; delinquent children; dependent, neglected, and defective children; mothers' allowances; and child protection. Studies were made and numerous conferences and public hearings were held. The commission reported annually to the legislature from 1922 to 1926. During these 5 years, 60 legislative measures were proposed by the commission, of which 29 were enacted into law.

DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL PUBLIC-WELFARE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

The responsibility for developing and improving local public-welfare services was shared by several State departments. Each department had authority to supervise the local services related to its field of activity. In a State having as complex organization for social welfare as New York, it is difficult to judge the extent to which local agencies have been developed through the activities of State agencies. Undoubtedly the studies of social needs and local provisions that have been made by these departments have been a significant factor in furthering social legislation to create local public agencies.

Among the unofficial groups and organizations that have played an important part in the development of the State welfare program, the New York State Charities Aid Association has been outstanding in the development of services for children. The united action of the State board of charities and the New York State Charities Aid Association resulted in 1875⁷⁹ in the enactment of a law requiring the removal from almshouses of all children between the ages of 3 and 16 years and the placement in families or institutions of all who were not defective in body or mind. In 1878⁸⁰ the law was amended to include children from 2 to 16 years, and in 1896⁸¹ its intent was clarified by a specific statement that a child under 2 years of age was permitted to be in the almshouse with his mother. Although the statutes gave boards of supervisors the power to take such action as was necessary to make this act effective, the tendency at first was to use principally institutional care for children who needed to be separated from their own families. The removal of children from almshouses resulted in an increase in local payments from public funds to private institutions at agreed rates on a per-capita basis. Many children were retained in institutions for long periods.

The realization that this was happening prompted the New York State Charities Aid Association to formulate a plan whereby public officials could be encouraged to use other kinds of care than institutional care for children, when such care was adapted to the individual needs of the children. Accordingly, beginning in 1907, county children's committees of the association were organized in many of the counties of the State and assumed the responsibility for service to children who were referred by poor-law officials for care and treatment. The development of these committees by the New York State Charities Aid Association has influenced much of the county organization work that has been undertaken in other States by de-

⁷⁹ Laws of 1875, ch. 173.

⁸⁰ Laws of 1878, ch. 404.

⁸¹ Laws of 1896, ch. 225, sec. 56.

partments corresponding to the New York Department of Social Welfare. On January 1, 1932, in 31 counties of the State, county children's committees were functioning and in these and most other counties one or more full-time qualified social workers were employed to assist the commissioner of public welfare and the children's courts with the children's work of the county. These children's agents, as they were popularly called, were originally employed in many counties by the county children's committees under agreements or contracts with boards of supervisors, appropriations for their salaries being made by the supervisors to the committees. At the time this study was made, salaries and expenses of the agents in most counties were paid by the county, and the agents were actually employees of the county commissioner of public welfare responsible for services to children.⁸²

COUNTY SERVICES FOR PROTECTION AND CARE OF CHILDREN

The public-welfare law of 1929 continued the authority of the department of social welfare to supervise the work of public-welfare officials, to advise them in the performance of their official duties, and to collect such statistical information as was deemed desirable.⁸³ County and certain city commissioners of public welfare were given broad responsibilities by this law for protective work and for the care of children in need of such services, including destitute, neglected, and abandoned children; delinquent children not under the jurisdiction of the children's court; defective and physically handicapped children; and children born out of wedlock.⁸⁴

The New York State Charities Aid Association maintained an active interest in the work of the county children's committees established under its auspices, and through its staff and field workers supervised and advised the children's agents in their respective districts. An effort was made to visit each agent several times a year and to spend several days in going over her work with her. The association also assisted in the selection of agents and other workers. The county children's committees were also subject to the supervision of the State department of social welfare, but fortunately there was close cooperation between the department and the association in the pursuit of their common policy for the development of effective case work in child-welfare activities throughout the State.

The organization of child-caring activities and the services provided for children varied widely in the counties of the State. In a few instances a staff was employed, reasonably adequate both in competence and number. At the other extreme the county commissioner attempted to administer the work for dependent children without the assistance of any children's agents. Local practices as to the division of work between the county commissioner and the county children's court also varied widely. In one county more than 74 percent of the children cared for at public expense outside their

⁸² Laws of 1929, ch. 565.

⁸³ The laws of 1937, ch. 544, further extended State responsibilities by authorizing the State board of social welfare to establish in cooperation with the civil-service commission minimum qualifications for positions in local welfare departments.

⁸⁴ Ch. 15, Laws of 1937, sec. 1, revised sec. 185, made possible the transfer of all powers and duties relating to children from the commissioner of public welfare to the county board of child welfare.

own homes on December 31, 1932, had been accepted for care by order of the children's court. In another county over 88 percent had been accepted through the commissioner of public welfare without court action. In some counties the children's agent was also the executive officer of the board of child welfare, which administered mothers' aid. In others the board of child welfare employed its own agent or did its work through its unpaid members.

COUNTY BOARDS OF CHILD WELFARE

In the department of social welfare a special bureau of the division of child welfare maintained supervision of the county boards of child welfare, which administered mothers' aid. This bureau had a full-time director and the part-time assistance of the social workers allocated to the division.

The department report for the year ended June 30, 1933, showed that such boards were active in all but 11 of the 62 counties in the State. The grants were made from county funds, as State funds were not provided to assist the counties.⁸⁵

The bureau of boards of child welfare was responsible for developing standards of case work and for promoting uniform policies and practices in the administration of mothers' aid.⁸⁶ Suggestions for uniform practices governing mothers' aid allowances were prepared by the bureau. These covered such problems as property allowed to beneficiaries, life insurance, supplementary aid, family budgets, health conditions, employment of the mother and the children, and school attendance. A standard family budget was recommended as a basis for the grant to be allowed. The bureau also prepared instructions for keeping satisfactory case records and standard forms for applications and reports. In addition to these the bureau issued information on medical examinations, school reports, bank accounts, life insurance, and similar subjects.

Both monthly and annual reports were required from each child-welfare board; summaries of the reports were prepared and copies distributed to the various boards. The annual reports gave such information as the membership of the board, its policies and meetings, a statement about its finances and grants, the number of beneficiaries classified by cause of dependency, the disposition of applications received during the year, and the number of visits made to the families receiving aid.

As no State funds were involved, the bureau did not receive and review individual applications, but any person who had knowledge that relief was being granted in violation of the requirements of the act could file a complaint with the department of social welfare, and the department had the power to revoke the allowance after proper investigation, or to order the local board of child welfare to take other action.⁸⁷

About once in 18 months a member of the supervisory staff spent from 2 to 3 weeks in each county making a general survey of the work of the local board of child welfare. A detailed schedule form was used for this, in order that comparable information could be

⁸⁵ Under the Social Security Act, Federal funds are made available for aid to dependent children, and New York is cooperating in this program.

⁸⁶ Known as aid to dependent children, beginning in 1937.

⁸⁷ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, general municipal law, sec. 152 (7).

obtained for all counties. In the course of a county survey, the worker read the records and visited the homes of one-fourth to one-half of the families receiving aid. Conferences were held with board members, and close contact was maintained with the local agent if one was employed. As soon as possible after a county survey was completed, a report of the findings was sent to the staff and the members of the local board of child welfare. Frequently the supervisor of the bureau also visited the board, in order to interpret the findings and to discuss the points brought out by the survey. The bureau has found these surveys helpful in the development of uniform practices and policies, record keeping, and case-work procedure.

The department had no control over the selection of the local staff, although a consistent effort was made to have the boards choose persons qualified to do this work. According to the report made by the department for the fiscal year 1933, paid service was available to the boards in all but 15 counties. In these 15 counties board members themselves undertook to administer mothers' aid. This does not mean that adequate service was available in all counties, for only 12 counties, in addition to the 5 counties of New York City, employed one or more full-time mothers' aid workers.

The State bureau has provided some educational services for local boards. An annual conference of these boards was held, and in addition a half-day session of the State conference on social work was devoted to mothers' aid problems. The State department has distributed informative literature which included sample records, nutrition pamphlets from the health department, and United States Children's Bureau publications. The annual institutes held by the State conference of social work provided training courses for mothers' aid workers.

In general, State supervision of the administration of mothers' aid has been considered helpful, although in some counties there was a feeling that little was gained by the supervisory program. The supervision was educational, and its value depended upon such qualities as open-mindedness, education, and intelligence of the person supervised as well as upon the skill and understanding of the personnel of the State staff. The bureau did not use demonstration as a means of raising standards.

SUPERVISION OF PROBATION

The division of probation of the department of correction was responsible for supervision of probation work throughout the State. The division was headed by a director and had the assistance of an advisory State probation commission.

The field staff consisted of four examiners responsible for field supervision of all the probation work of the State, including services for children and adult offenders. In 1934 the staff supervised 463 probation officers, who had more than 28,000 adults and children under care. The smallness of the staff was a serious handicap to the division, which attempted through a variety of services to improve the quality of probation work throughout the State.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Probation in New York State, pp. 35-37. Special Report by Commission to Investigate Prison Administration and Construction. Albany, N. Y., 1933.

The division of probation has endeavored to obtain qualified probation officers. No authority was given to the State department to set standards or to assist in the selection of probation officers. The division has cooperated with the department of civil service in setting up examinations for probation positions, but the requirements were far too low. Graduation from high school or its equivalent was the only educational requirement set. Higher qualifications were required, however, in some probation offices. This division had no power to remove incompetent officers.

The training of officers already in service was one of the activities of the division, and for a time a series of institutes for probation officers was held throughout the State. In addition to general inspection of probation work, the division made upon request intensive studies of probation in different counties and conducted annual conferences of probation officers, magistrates, and judges of children's courts.

Special attention has been given to the work of children's courts. The division was consulted on many problems not essentially those of probation and received many requests for assistance in improving procedures in the courts. Many of the special studies made by the division related to the work of children's courts. Reports of such studies as well as regular inspection reports have been made available for the use of the division of child welfare in the department of social welfare. The division has developed a uniform reporting system for children's courts, and statistical information has been tabulated. This statistical information has been adapted to the uniform reporting of juvenile-court statistics developed by the United States Children's Bureau and is incorporated in the annual report of juvenile-court statistics issued by the Bureau.

CARE OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

In general, the State of New York does not provide direct care for dependent children. At the time this study was made it maintained a school for dependent Indian children. Children from the reservations within the State who could not be admitted to the Thomas Indian School were maintained at State expense in child-caring institutions or in foster homes. In addition a small number of "State poor" children were similarly cared for. "State poor" persons are those who have no settlement within the State and who have not resided in any county for a period of 60 days during the year preceding the application for relief.

STATE SUPERVISORY SERVICES

The supervision of organizations caring for dependent children was the responsibility of the division of child welfare. The supervisory services were divided into three units. The assistant commissioner in charge of the division was responsible for the supervision of all institutions caring for children as well as for the general direction of the work of the entire division. Supervision of child-placing agencies and of the placements made by these agencies was the responsibility of the director of the bureau of foster-home care, and supervision of county child-welfare boards, discussed on page 26, was under the bureau organized for this purpose.

The division of child welfare had no specialists on its staff except the directors of these three services. The social workers doing field work were called upon to visit and inspect, to assist and advise, and to make special surveys and studies of any of the organizations under the supervision of the division. The staff of 11 field workers in 1934 was far too small to serve adequately the large number of organizations that were the responsibility of this division.

Approval of incorporation of private organizations.

No corporation can be created without the approval of the board of social welfare if the application for incorporation specifies among the purposes of the organization the care of destitute, delinquent, abandoned, neglected, or dependent children, the maintenance of a lying-in asylum, or the placing out or boarding out of children.⁸⁹

When the application was referred by the secretary of State, a member of the board of social welfare or one of the staff made an investigation, considering the following points:⁹⁰

1. The public need for such an institution or agency at the time and place and under the circumstances set forth in the application and certificate.
2. The character and standing in the community of the proposed incorporators.
3. The financial resources of the proposed institution and its sources of future revenue.
4. Such other matter or matters as may be deemed to be in the public interest.

When necessary a public hearing was held to determine whether or not incorporation should be permitted. For the fiscal year ended June 30, 1933, the board reported 14 incorporations approved, 9 disapproved, and a large number of other applications considered and withdrawn at the proponents' request.

Reports from children's organizations.

The department of social welfare prescribed the types of reports to be made by child-caring organizations. These included a monthly statement of movement of population in the institution or agency and individual reports on each child. A report on the social history of each child was required by the department of social welfare on admission or acceptance for care. Additional data had to be submitted whenever the type or place of care of a child was changed. When a child was discharged a report was made. Special reports were also made when there was a change in a child's status as a private or a public charge. The division of research, in cooperation with a special committee of the American Statistical Association, began in 1933 to reevaluate the data to be submitted on these reports and to formulate a plan that would provide serviceable records as well as a satisfactory statistical picture of the care being given in the State to children cared for away from their own homes.⁹¹

Supervision of institutions.

More than 300 private institutions for children were under the jurisdiction of the department. The majority of the institutions were for the care of children in general, but a few were more special-

⁸⁹ Cal'III's Consolidated Laws, 1930, membership corporation law, ch. 35, sec. 11, subd. 1, as amended by Laws of 1931, ch. 454, and sec. 1b as added by ch. 595, Laws of 1934.

⁹⁰ Bylaws of the [New York] State Board of Social Welfare. State Department of Social Welfare. Albany, N. Y., 1931.

⁹¹ Handbook for the Collection and Tabulation of Statistical Information About Children in Foster Care. New York State Department of Social Welfare. Albany, N. Y., 1935.

ized institutions, including day nurseries; temporary homes and special homes or schools for delinquent, physically handicapped, or convalescent children; preventorium and other institutions providing health services.

The laws of New York do not provide for the licensing of incorporated institutions caring for dependent, neglected, or delinquent children, but the State board of social welfare is directed by the constitution⁹² to establish rules and regulations governing the reception and retention of persons cared for as public charges and is further empowered by the State charities law⁹³ to establish rules and regulations concerning records, buildings, equipment, and standards of care for such persons. Before 1931 its authority over private institutions was limited to those receiving payments from public funds. Approximately four-fifths of the children cared for in private institutions on December 31, 1931, were public charges.⁹⁴ The State charities law⁹⁵ as amended in 1931 extended the authority of the department to include the inspection of all private child-caring institutions to determine their compliance with the rules of the board of social welfare. Legislation effective October 1, 1935, provided that unincorporated institutions shall be licensed by the State department of social welfare.⁹⁶

The State board of social welfare has formulated rules for private institutions under which public charges might be received only when committed or accepted by local officers or boards responsible for the care of destitute persons or when committed by the courts. Annual reacceptances must be requested except in cases of delinquency. A form has been prescribed for bills submitted to counties, cities, towns, or villages, and payments were dependent upon compliance with certain general laws, rules, regulations, or ordinances. Adequate fire protection must be maintained, proper sanitation provided, and a suitable diet supplied. Each institution must keep a record of inmates and of receipts and expenditure of money. Annual reports were required. All plans for the construction of buildings must be submitted to the State board of social welfare. Supplementary rules for children's institutions require adequate recreational facilities, provision for a rounded educational program, separation of destitute children from delinquent children and from destitute adults, and the keeping of detailed records as to the social history of the children, methods of discipline authorized, and illnesses.

Formerly an annual inspection was made of all private institutions, but an increase in the work of the division without a corresponding increase in staff made it necessary to vary the frequency of inspections according to the needs of the institutions. A random sample of about 30 institution records studied in 1930 showed that from 8 to 22 months had elapsed between the last two inspection visits, with 14 or 15 months as the most usual time. From 1 to 10 days were spent on such inspections, depending upon the size of the institution and the problems encountered during the visit. The gen-

⁹² New York State Constitution, art. VIII, sec. 14.

⁹³ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, sec. 18.

⁹⁴ Foster, James H., and Robert Axel: Volume, Distribution, and Cost of Child Dependency in New York State, p. 8. State Department of Social Welfare, Albany, N. Y., 1933.

⁹⁵ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, sec. 19, as amended by ch. 454, Laws of 1931.

⁹⁶ Laws of 1934, ch. 802.

eral plan of inspection was first to make a thorough basic study of each institution and on subsequent inspections to obtain only supplementary information or to study special problems. Owing to the many types of service given by the field agents this plan was not always followed. The reports varied considerably in value. Some showed an intelligent understanding of institutional problems with constructive suggestions for improvement, while others showed little imagination as to desirable changes, merely a formal compliance with the law. It was not uncommon to find a mass of detail, with little interpretation. Certain points were observed in the plant, the institutional management, and the social policies, and the institution was graded according to a prescribed scale.

Much of the educational work with the institutions was done by the field agents during their visits. Its value varied with the ability of the inspector to see clearly, to make constructive suggestions, and to stimulate the institution staff to follow these suggestions. When changes in program were needed, reports of the visits were submitted to the boards of managers of the institutions and the problems were talked over with them. Lack of specialists on the staff has limited the assistance that could be given in working out special problems, but every effort has been made to assist the institution to obtain special information and advice. At one time the department conducted regional conferences for institutional workers, but because of the diversity of interests of the persons attending and the expense involved these conferences were given up.

A small group of day nurseries receiving public aid was supervised by the State department of social welfare, although the nurseries were licensed by the local departments of health.⁹⁷

Supervision of child-placing agencies.

Licenses are not required for child-placing agencies in the State of New York because child placing is restricted to the institutions or agencies that are incorporated or organized under the State law for the purpose of placing children. At the time of this study, 51 private agencies and 68 public departments placed children in foster homes and came under the general supervision of the bureau of foster homes in the division of child welfare. This supervision differed little from that in States where similar departments license child-placing agencies.

In the course of its supervision the division of child welfare made a study of each agency, including organization, finances, staff and allocation of workers, and type and extent of services. Standards of physical care, dental care, psychiatric service, and other facilities for the well-being of the children were also taken into consideration. Visits were made to a sufficiently large sample of free, work, and boarding homes in order to gain a fair idea of the quality of the placements made and the care given to the children. When unsatisfactory placements were discovered, the department could order the agency to remove the children. The method of following up these visits of inspection corresponds to that used for institutions. Detailed reports were sent to persons concerned with the work of the agency, and conferences were arranged to discuss problems.

⁹⁷ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, State charities law, sec. 305; penal law, sec. 482.

In the supervision of public child placing the bureau of foster-home care cooperated closely with the New York State Charities Aid Association, which has been responsible for the appointment of children's agents in many counties. The relationship between the State agency and the association was somewhat complicated, for both organizations supervised local public work for children. The two worked together harmoniously, however, each supplementing the activities of the other. The director of the bureau of foster-home care spent more time in the counties where the association was not functioning, thus avoiding overlapping of services and giving more time for the counties that needed more service. Reports of visits to the counties and recommendations made were exchanged by the two agencies.

Interstate placements.—In the past, New York agencies placed a large number of New York children in other States. This practice has greatly decreased, however. New York has no law governing exportation of children, but considerable thought has been given by the division of child care as to desirable methods of safeguarding all such children as have come to their attention through the placement reports of agencies. All persons or agencies bringing children into the State for placement in foster homes must be licensed by the State department of social welfare. Few agencies from other States are licensed to make placements in New York. These agencies are required to give bond and to report each individual placement. At the time of this study the division was not equipped to give special supervision to their placements.

Ignorance of the law regarding the placement of children from outside the State or indifference to it has resulted in some illegal placements by outside agencies. Several maternity homes have made such placements, which have necessitated investigation outside the State, cooperation with departments in other States, and much correspondence. The attorney general has ruled that persons accepting illegally placed children are guilty equally with those placing the children. A circular letter giving this opinion was sent to the judges throughout the State. Another problem with which the division had to deal was acceptance of children from outside the State for placement by several New York agencies that were authorized under the State law to place children.

Supervision of boarding homes.

A new system for the licensing and supervision of homes in which children were boarded was provided by a law that became effective October 1, 1935.⁹⁸ Under this law authorized agencies, including private agencies and public officers and departments having the care of dependent children, are empowered to certify the boarding homes they use and are required to report certified homes to the department of social welfare. Other boarding homes are to be licensed by the department of social welfare. The department is to supervise all these licensed boarding homes, to establish rules and regulations for them, and may order the removal of children improperly placed. A boarding home may not care for more than six children. An unincorporated institution may care for more than six children,

⁹⁸ Laws of 1934, ch. 802.

provided it is licensed by the department of social welfare to do so and observes all the rules and regulations applicable to incorporated institutions.

At the time this study was made the licensing of boarding homes was under the general direction of the State department of health. Licenses were actually granted by local health officers, who sent duplicates to the State office. The State department published standards to guide local health officers and prepared forms to be used in the inspection of boarding homes, so that the information would be comparable. Local health officers were expected to make thorough investigations before granting licenses, to make a monthly inspection thereafter, and to renew the license annually if the monthly inspections have shown the home to be satisfactory. In actual practice the inspections varied widely. There were in New York State 1,212 local health units, each employing a physician as health officer. In the majority of these units the health officer gave only part-time service. In the main the inspections that were made were confined to a consideration of health conditions, and in many localities little attention was paid to the social value of the homes.

In supervising the work of agencies that place children in foster homes, the State department of social welfare often discovered children in unlicensed boarding homes or found undesirable conditions in licensed homes. Unsatisfactory conditions have also been found as a result of complaints made directly to the department. For example, one boarding home licensed under the earlier law to care for 12 children was found to have unsatisfactory sleeping arrangements and an inadequate diet for the 9 children in its care, whose ages ranged from 7 months to 14 years. Such conditions have always been reported immediately to the department of health. In spite of cordial working relationships and frequent conferences between departments, the arrangement for licensing under the earlier law was cumbersome and awkward. Needless duplication was common; the local public-health nurses, the local child-placing agency, and the two State departments often visited the same home, and yet other homes were not supervised. Independent boarding homes where children were placed by parents or relatives presented a difficulty that close cooperation between the departments was not able to solve.

Supervision of maternity homes and hospitals.

State supervision of maternity homes involves two important problems: (1) The development of adequate maternity care and satisfactory health conditions and (2) the provision of social services and safeguards for the unmarried mother and her child. In the past the health aspects rather than the social aspects have received major attention in New York. The division of maternity, infancy, and child hygiene in the State department of health was the State agency responsible for supervision of maternity homes and hospitals, and every effort has been made to eliminate undesirable ones and to improve the maternity care given in others.

The division of maternity, infancy, and child hygiene shared the supervision of maternity homes and hospitals with the local health officers, who issued annual licenses and were supposed to visit each home or hospital monthly. Members of the State staff endeavored to make at least an annual inspection visit; in 1930, 177 maternity homes

and hospitals were inspected. Duplicates of all licenses issued were sent by the local officers to the State department of health. Each maternity home was required to keep a register of maternity cases in a book owned and furnished by the State department of health and was subject to the rules and regulations prepared by the State department. These regulations for the most part applied to sanitary conditions and necessary equipment, although an extract from the State charities law was quoted to remind the hospitals and homes that it was illegal for an unincorporated maternity hospital or home to place a child in a foster home for adoption or care unless the hospital had been authorized by the State board of social welfare to place children.

Through a law ⁹⁹ that became effective October 1, 1935, more adequate consideration has been given to the social aspects of the problem. This law provides that any maternity home that has not been incorporated under the law must obtain a license from the State commissioner of health. All licensed maternity homes must be inspected at least once in 3 months by the commissioner of health or his authorized agent. Each maternity home is subject to the rules and regulations of the State department of health; these apply mostly to the health and sanitary aspects. The State department of social welfare is authorized to make rules and regulations concerning records, buildings, equipment, and standards of care which shall apply in the operation of all maternity homes, and must inspect periodically all such homes, examine the records, and obtain any information desired as to the children that have been or are under care. Only maternity homes that have been incorporated as child-placing agencies may place children in foster homes.

SERVICES FOR SPECIAL GROUPS OF DEPENDENT CHILDREN

Adoptions.

No responsibility has been given to the department of social welfare in adoption cases. According to the law the court having jurisdiction in such cases must have a social investigation made as a basis for its decision regarding the petition.¹⁰⁰ The quality of the investigation made has depended upon the social resources available to or used by the court. Fortunately the children's worker serving the county commissioner of public welfare or a qualified probation officer was called upon for this service in some counties. There was no uniformity throughout the State, however, in the protection given to children in adoption cases.

Children born out of wedlock.

No State service was provided for this group of children. In the public-welfare law passed in 1929, county and certain city commissioners of public welfare were specially charged with services for these children and their mothers, including the institution of proceedings to establish paternity and to obtain the father's support for the child.¹⁰¹ The department of social welfare has had general responsibility for supervision of the work of county commissioners of public

⁹⁹ Laws of 1934, ch. 802.

¹⁰⁰ Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, domestic relations law, sec. 112 (4).

¹⁰¹ Laws of 1929, ch. 565, sec. 106.

welfare. In connection with its studies of child care in the several counties the department has given attention to local practices in regard to children born out of wedlock.

CARE OF MENTALLY HANDICAPPED AND PROBLEM CHILDREN

The department of mental hygiene controlled the State mental-hygiene program. In addition to the administration of 18 State hospitals for the insane, 5 institutions for the feeble-minded, a psychopathic hospital, a psychiatric institute and hospital, and an institution for epileptics, this department licensed and supervised at the time of the study 30 private institutions caring for the mentally ill, and 12 private schools or homes for mentally defective children.

Child-guidance clinics held throughout the State were an important part of the preventive work of the department. In these clinics a thorough physical and mental examination of each child was made, as well as a study of environmental factors, in order to determine the cause of the child's difficulty. This was followed by recommendations for treatment. The close cooperation of local workers was obtained in order that satisfactory follow-up work could be carried on. Cases were referred to the clinics by school authorities, welfare agencies, social workers, parents, judges of children's courts, physicians, and others. The clinics were intended for all children who needed such service, including nervous, retarded, and other problem children of school or preschool age. The clinics cooperated with the department of education in recommending that children be put in special classes or given special treatment.

The staff for most of the clinic units was composed of a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a psychiatric social worker. For the most part local social workers were relied upon to make case investigations, although the State staff could be used for supplementary investigations. Local health officers contributed valuable assistance, making medical examinations of children attending the clinics. Clinics were held in the smaller cities and in rural or semirural communities where no other mental-hygiene clinics existed. During the year ended June 30, 1933, child-guidance clinics were conducted by the clinic staff of the department and by the staffs of the State hospital in 140 communities. In some localities clinics were held monthly except during July and August; in others only occasional visits were made by a clinic unit. The problems met in these clinics were varied. Out of 3,910 new cases, nearly half were problems of mental defect or retardation, about one-seventh were problems of behavior, about one-tenth involved abnormal reactions or nervous disorders, and the remainder presented school, social, or health problems.

Social service for some children was also provided by the social workers on the staff of the State training schools for mental defectives. In helping the feeble-minded boy or girl to readjust to community life after a period of training in a State school, the social worker tried to find a suitable home where the child could work for fair wages and at the same time have close supervision. Much service was needed in working out problems between the employer and the child, and many personal services were given, including help in the purchase of clothes, supervision of expenditures and savings, and help in obtaining recreation and companionship. Valuable as

such services were, the social-service staff was too small to do all the work of this type that was needed. A real attempt has been made, however, to stimulate community interest and to develop local services.

CARE OF DELINQUENT CHILDREN

State services for children who are delinquent or whose conduct has been unsatisfactory have been described under previous sections. When this study was made they were divided among the three major welfare departments as follows: The State department of social welfare administered State institutions for delinquent children, and through the division of child welfare supervised private institutions caring for delinquent and problem children; the division of probation of the department of correction supervised the work of probation officers and gave advice and consultation service to children's courts; and the department of mental hygiene through its child-guidance clinics assisted the courts, the schools, the social agencies, and the parents in studying the needs of these children.

CARE OF PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

BLIND AND DEAF CHILDREN

Educational provisions for blind and deaf children in residential schools as well as special classes for these children in the public schools are the responsibility of the education department.¹⁰² Children accepted by the State as State pupils were cared for in three residential schools for the blind, of which one was a State institution, and in seven residential schools for the deaf. When private institutions were used for State wards, payment was made on a per-capita basis.

Some special services for blind children were also given by the division for the blind of the department of social welfare.

CRIPPLED CHILDREN

Responsibility for State aid and services to crippled children was vested in the departments of education and health.¹⁰³ A special bureau or division for crippled children has been set up in each of these departments.

In New York State provision has been made whereby counties are entitled to reimbursement from the State to the amount of one-half the expenditures for education of crippled children and for medical or hospital care and necessary appliances for crippled children when orders are issued by judges of the children's courts, provided orders for such care have been approved by the commissioner of education if for home teaching, transportation, tuition, maintenance, or scholarship, or by the commissioner of health if for physical care and treatment.¹⁰⁴ The statutes also provide that in the annual school census information should be obtained about children under 18 years of

¹⁰² Cahill's Consolidated Laws, 1930, education law, secs. 970-981, 990-1012, 1020, as amended by Laws of 1931, ch. 297.

¹⁰³ Under the Social Security Act, Federal funds are made available for services for crippled children, and New York is cooperating in this program.

¹⁰⁴ Endres, Joseph J.: *The Education and Care of Physically Handicapped Children*. University of the State of New York Bulletin No. 993. Albany, N. Y., 1932.

age, including infants and preschool children, who are deaf, blind, or crippled, or who have other physical defects.¹⁰⁵

The bureau of physically handicapped children of the education department obtained information about children found by the school census to be in need of care. All cases in which there was need for medical services were referred to the State department of health, division of orthopedics, which made an investigation and the necessary arrangements for physical care. Children 16 years or over who needed vocational education or assistance in obtaining employment were referred to the rehabilitation bureau of the education department. The bureau of physically handicapped children approved State aid for crippled children who needed special educational opportunities and cooperated with local school authorities in arranging for such necessary services as home teaching, transportation, payments of tuition in special schools, and maintenance. The bureau relied upon local agencies for locating needy children, conducting social investigations previous to court orders, making applications to the court for aid, and supplying follow-up services in the homes. A few of the larger counties have employed full-time agents for these services.¹⁰⁶

Before 1931 the major responsibility for the State reconstruction home, which provided hospital care for crippled children, was placed in the department of social welfare. In 1931 administration of the hospital was transferred to the department of health, thereby centering all medical services for crippled children in this department.¹⁰⁷ The division of orthopedics of the department of health had charge of services for crippled children. It provided diagnostic clinics and through its staff of 20 nurses carried on follow-up services in the homes of the children examined. The division was under the direction of a full-time orthopedist and received part-time services from other orthopedists. The division provided training classes for orthopedic nurses and reconstruction aids and was interested in the development of local diagnostic clinics and services.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Laws of 1925, ch. 227.

¹⁰⁶ Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the [New York] State Education Department, 1930, vol. 1, pp. 160-162. Albany, N. Y., 1930.

¹⁰⁷ Laws of 1931, ch. 481.

¹⁰⁸ Public Health in New York State, pp. 324-328. Report of the New York State Health Commission, 1932. State Department of Health, Albany, N. Y., 1932.



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